

THE FEDERAL SPOILS

Dulski Plans Bill to Liberalize U.S. Employees' Retirement Benefits

By JOSEPH YOUNG
Star Staff Writer

Rep. Thaddeus Dulski, D-N.Y., chairman of the House Civil Service Committee, this week will sponsor legislation to liberalize government employee retirement benefits.

The bill would do the following:

- Increase annuities on retirement by changing the computation formula so that when an employee completes 10 years of service, all past and future service will be creditable at a flat 2 percent rate. At present, the first five years are computed at a 1½ percent rate and the next five years at 1¼ percent.
- Increase survivor annuities to 60 percent of the annuity rather than the present 55 percent.
- Liberalize the survivorship formula so that the sum on which the 2½ percent reduction is applicable is changed from the present \$3,600 to \$4,800. A retiree would therefore have the 2½ percent deducted on the first \$4,800 of his annual annuity and 10 percent of all amounts over \$4,800. At present the 10 percent reduction is applicable on all amounts over \$3,600.
- Change the definition of basic

pay to include overtime, thereby increasing an employee's annuity when he retires. Employees' contributions to the retirement fund would include payment on their overtime pay.

- Change the cost of living adjustment formula so that future increases for federal retirees would be effective when the consumers price index rose by 2 percent and remained at that figure for at least two consecutive months rather than the present formula which requires a 3 percent increase over three consecutive months.

The legislation has the strong support of the powerful National Association of Letter Carriers and is regarded as the union's reply to the move in Congress to increase government employees' present 6½ percent of salary contribution to 7 percent to strengthen the financing of the civil service retirement system. The NALC's position is that if the unions are to support the 7 percent deduction, then present retirement benefits must be liberalized along the lines proposed in the bill.

LABOR HEARINGS PROMISED — Hearings in May on legislation that would give government employee unions collective bargaining rights have been promised by Rep. David Henderson, D-N.C., chairman of the House Civil Service and Manpower subcommittee. Eighty-two such bills have been sponsored in the House.

In addition, seven senators have joined Sen. Daniel Brewster, D-Md., in co-sponsoring similar legislation in the Senate.

Democratic Sens. Harrison Williams of New Jersey, Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts, Joseph Clark of Pennsylvania, Joseph Tydings of Maryland and Walter Mondale of Minnesota; and Republicans Norris Cotton of New Hampshire and Mark Hatfield of Oregon.

Meanwhile, the President's review committee on presidential executive order 10988 on labor-management in government is expected to make its recommendations for changes in the program by the end of next month.

SILLY SEASON — The weekly publication, Federal Times, recently received a letter from Democratic national chairman John Bailey, which contained the greeting: "Dear Federal." Reminds us of the time a job applicant wrote a letter to the General Services Administration, with the salutation: "Dear General."

ASSAULT PROTECTION — A House Civil Service subcommittee headed by Rep. Robert Nix, D-Pa., is expected to approve a bill this week making it a federal offense to assault postal workers. The measure also provides that a postal employee who strikes another employee be discharged. This bill also has the strong backing of the National Association of Letter Carriers, which complains that there has been an alarming increase in assaults on mailmen.

James Rademacher, NALC vice president, cited hundreds of cases in which letter carriers have been severely beaten by thugs, thieves and disgruntled patrons. Rademacher said that these cases are usually handled as misdemeanors by cities and states.

Assistant Postmaster General Richard Murphy has given the administration's endorsement to the bill.

SUPER-GRADES — The House Civil Service Committee has approved a bill giving the government an additional 482 super-grade jobs (GS-16 through 18). All the Republican members of the committee who were present voted against the bill — an indication that Republicans in the House are going to pursue an economy course this year designed to block any legislation that would increase government pay. "I don't see any sense in this one."

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